



California State Athletic Commission

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What are some of the most important steps that I need to take to be assured that my suitability to compete will be properly and timely evaluated?

A. Do not rely on the advice of others. Read the application instructions and follow them without exception. Submit completed licensing documents in a timely manner. Call the Commission for assistance, if needed.

Q. What does the Commission consider as valid identification?

A. Any identification with a government issued photograph such as a passport, a driver license, verified immigration identification card, etc.

NOTE: Valid identification at the weigh-in is **mandatory**. If you do not provide a valid identification, you will not be allowed to compete.

Q. Why must I submit an application first? Why can't I turn in my medical reports and then turn in an application at the weigh-in?

A. The licensing process does not begin until the Commission receives a completed and signed application form. You may fax a copy to the Commission office to begin the process, but the original documents must be submitted at the weigh-in.

Q. Can I use medical reports from other states?

A. The Commission is in the process of reviewing a process of being able to accept medical examinations from other United States commissions (ABC Members) in an effort to help athletes and promoters in the licensing process. It is anticipated that an announcement will be made in the first quarter of 2008 regarding this.

At this time examinations must be performed by the qualified practitioner for each examination and the results of the examinations must be recorded on Commission approved forms.

Ex: Ophthalmologic Examination by a licensed Ophthalmologist; Neurological Examination by a licensed physician who specializes in neurology or neurosurgery, etc. on the Commission form.

Q. How long is my MRI good for?

A. The Commission uses the approved MRI Diagnostic Report and film as a baseline. The Commission reserves the right to request another MRI if it believes that the applicant's health and safety could be jeopardized by not doing so.

Generally, unless you have suffered a pertinent untoward medical event or have suffered in your career, i.e. knockouts, loss of consciousness, injuries, documented drug use, etc. another MRI will not be required.

Q. Do I have to take the MRI in California?

A. No. However, a Commission approved medical practitioner must administer it.

*At a minimum, the MRI scan is to be performed on a 1.5 Tesla MR Machine with capabilities including fast spin echo and FLAIR imaging. Image sequences should include axial T1, T2, and FLAIR images; coronal images should be performed as a T2 coronal; and a single sagittal T1 sequence. Please take this notice and the **MRI Review Summary** form to the neurologist or neurosurgeon that performed your neurological examination. Please have the report and form immediately faxed to the California State Athletic Commission at 916-263-2197.*

Q. Do I have to submit the actual MRI film with the report?

*A. In order to compete, you must submit the MRI Diagnostic Report and the **MRI Review Summary** form signed by the licensed physician specializing in neurology or neurosurgery who performed your neurological examination. A delay in receiving these documents may result in a cancellation of your bout. The Commission expects to receive the actual film no later than 10 days from the date of the report. If you do not comply with this requirement, the Commission may temporarily suspend your license and notify the national registry of the suspension.*

Q. Is there an age limit and if I am considered too old, what can I do to compete?

A. There is no age limit. Each applicant is reviewed based on their physical and mental state. Additionally, the Commission looks at the person's ability or potential ability to perform. Borderline or high-risk athletes will be required to undergo additional medical testing at the discretion of the Commission for obvious health and safety concerns. The Commission considers the following factors before it requires additional medical testing for athletes:

- Available information on www.fightfax.com and other internet sites such as www.boxrec.com, and various MMA web sites
- Licensure with another Commission
- Actual age
- Number of bouts
- Number of rounds fought
- Number of hard fights
- Number of identified injuries
- Number of knockouts suffered within the last 12 months where the contestant loss consciousness
- Periods of inactivity in excess of 12 calendar months
- Performance record for the past twenty-four months
- Weight, including fluctuations in weight
- Not meeting the vision requirements of Rule 282
- Previous cerebral hemorrhage or any other serious head injury
- Other physical condition or disability that may affect the athlete's ability to compete safely

*More importantly, passing medical testing does not guarantee that you will receive a license and/or be allowed to compete. **YOU MUST** demonstrate an ability to perform. If you have any questions, you should contact the Commission **BEFORE** you undergo any medical testing for licensing.*

Q. How long is my EKG good for?

A. The Commission uses the approved EKG examination results and the EKG Summary Report as a baseline. The Commission reserves the right to request another EKG or cardio examination if it believes that the applicant's health and safety could be jeopardized by not doing so.

Generally, unless you have suffered a pertinent untoward medical event or have suffered in your career, i.e. knockouts, loss of consciousness, injuries, documented drug use, etc. another EKG will not be required.

Q. Why can't an optometrist perform my eye exam? Why does it have to be an ophthalmologist?

A. Although optometrists are often referred to as "eye doctors", unlike ophthalmologists, they do not have medical degrees. An optometrist receives a Doctor of Optometry (OD) degree; he or she is licensed to practice optometry, not medicine. In other words, an ophthalmologist is a medical doctor (M.D.) who specializes in all aspects of eye care including diagnosis, management and surgery of ocular diseases and disorders. At this time, the law only permits the Commission to accept eye examinations from licensed physicians.

Q. How long is my eye exam good for?

A. The eye exam is valid for each licensing year.

Q. Can I compete if I do not bring my federal I.D. to the weigh-in (boxers only)?

A. Yes, however you may be fined if you do not bring your federal I.D. to the weigh-in.

Q. Can I compete if my federal I.D. is expired (boxers only)?

A. Existing federal law has clear requirements. You can only renew your federal I.D. in the state where you reside. If your federal I.D. is expired, you may be fined and allowed to compete. However, you will be placed on administrative suspension in the national registry until you submit proof that you have renewed your Federal I.D.

Q. How do I become licensed to make my pro debut?

*A. **First, contact the Commission.** The Commission staff will evaluate any prior combative sport experience or lack thereof. Contact the Commission before you do anything.*

Q. Can I compete if I am using prescription medication?

A. For health and safety reasons, the Commission may deny a license or delay the issuing of a license or refuse a licensee to compete if he or she is using medication that may enhance or diminish performance, or medication deemed detrimental to his or her health and safety.

If you are on any type of prescription medication, including medicinal marijuana, you must disclose this at the time of licensing and/or as early in the bout approval process as possible. The Commission will require you to submit ALL pertinent medical information regarding the prescription medication for submission to a Commission physician for review. The review and approval process takes time; therefore, this information must be disclosed immediately in the event planning process.

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE WEEK OF THE FIGHT OR THE WEIGH IN TO DISCLOSE THIS INFORMATION. DOING SO MAY CAUSE THE COMMISSION TO CANCEL YOUR FIGHT.

If you do not disclose that you are taking a prescribed medication prior to the fight and your drug test is positive, you will be suspended, fined, and/or may be required to appear in front of the Commission. You may also be subject to other disciplinary action including denial or revocation of your license.

Q. Why does the Commission test for drugs?

A. The Commission is mandated to enforce Title 4. Business Regulations, Division 2. State Athletic Commission§ 303. Administration or use of drugs. The rule states: The administration or use of any drugs, alcohol or stimulants, or injections in any part of the body, either before or during a match, to or by any boxer is prohibited.

Additionally, the Commission strives for a fair level playing field and considers drug usage for competition cheating.

Q. How do I know if I will be tested or not?

A. At events, all contestants are subject to drug testing of any kind at any time.

Q. What kinds of substances may be tested for at an event?

A. The following is a list of substances for which the Commission tests:

- Stimulants
- Narcotics
- Cannabinoids (Marijuana)
- Anabolic Agents (both Exogenous and Endogenous)
- Peptide Hormones
- Masking Agents
- Diuretics
- Glucocorticosteroids (Requires medical exemption)
- Beta-2 Agonists (Asthma Medications)
- Agents with Anti-Estrogenic Activity

Q. Is it okay to use dietary supplements?

A. The Commission's policy is one of 'strict liability'. This means **YOU** are responsible for anything that you put in your body. If you take supplements and you are later found to be positive, it is your responsibility.

Be aware that the supplement industry is poorly regulated. Don't put anything in your body that may negatively affect your health and safety and career.

If a prohibited substance is detected in your sample – even if it was unintentional – it will result in a violation of Rule 303.

Be aware that a wide range of products are considered dietary supplements including vitamins, minerals, amino acids, herbs, botanicals, and more. The Commission warns contestants that some of these products have a negative effect on performance.

Moreover, there are some studies (prior to 2004) that found that some supplements were contaminated with steroids.

Q. What if I need to take medicine for my health?

A. The Commission understands that some athletes may need to take prescribed medicine for symptoms diagnosed by physicians. However, don't attempt to use a medical prescription as an excuse to circumvent the anti-doping testing procedure or policy.

You must inform the Commission well before your bout if you are taking any kind of medicine. You will then need to be fully cleared by a Commission Physician. This may take time. Plan ahead. Many prescription and over-the-counter medicines can lead to a positive doping test, such as ADHD medicine, asthma inhalers, cold medicines, etc.

Call the USADA (Anti Doping Agency) Drug Reference Line (1-800-233-0393) to check any substance. You may apply to have medications containing prohibited substances approved for health conditions.

If you are taking a prescribed medicine, you must contact the Commission for instructions on how to apply for an exemption. This process needs to be completed well before the competition.

Q. What are my rights when I am being tested?

A. You have the right to:

- Bring a representative with you during the test
- Have the Commission representative explain any procedure that you do not understand.
- Provide feedback. Please let us know if there is any way that we can improve our testing policies or procedures.
- Document any portion of the test that may not feel right to you.

Do not sign any document if you do not know what it means.

Q. Do I have any responsibilities regarding the anti-doping test?

A. You have the responsibility to:

- Comply with the doping control testing procedure. The procedures are set up to ensure that the sample you give is the sample that is analyzed.
- Report to the designated testing area as instructed by the Commission representative.
- Stay within view of the Commission representative from the time you are notified until the sample collection procedures are complete.
- Ensure that all paperwork is completely accurate.

If a prohibited substance or method is detected in your sample – even if it was prescribed and the Commission was not informed in a timely and clear manner – it may result in a violation of Rule 303.

Q. Can I refuse to be tested?

A. A refusal is grounds for immediate indefinite suspension and withholding of pay. This means that you will be placed on the national registry as a suspended contestant and you will be ordered to appear in front of the Commission. You may also be subject to other penalties, such as license revocation and fine.

NOTE: The Commission respects all contestants while at the same time strives to assure that they compete in a drug free environment. The Commission is always looking for better ways to improve the anti doping procedures and preserve the integrity of all contestants. This may result in changes to the collection process at any time.